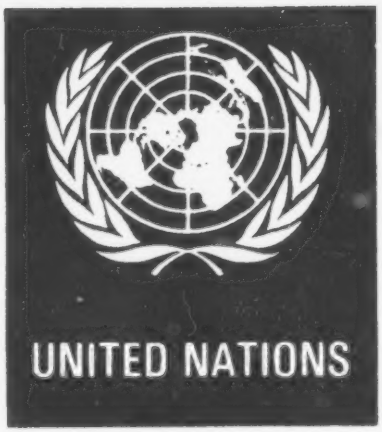

DIVISION FOR
PALESTINIAN RIGHTS

UNITED NATIONS
INTERNATIONAL NGO MEETING / EUROPEAN NGO SYMPOSIUM ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Palais des Nations, Geneva
25-28 August 1997

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations International NGO Meeting/European NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine was held as a combined event under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, from 25 to 28 August 1997.

2. The meeting was convened in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 51/23 and 51/24 of 4 December 1996. It was attended by 18 panelists and workshop resource persons, and by representatives of 107 NGOs, 15 of them as observers. It was also attended by 31 Governments, 5 intergovernmental organizations, 12 United Nations bodies and agencies, 5 NGO coordinating committees and a delegation of Palestine.

3. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation composed of Mr. Ibra Deguène Ka (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee and head of the delegation; Mr. Ravan A. G. Farhadi (Afghanistan), Vice-Chairman; Mr. George Saliba (Malta), Rapporteur of the Committee; Mr. Anatoli M. Zlenko (Ukraine); and Mr. M. Nasser Al-Kidwa (Palestine).

4. The programme of the meeting was formulated by the Committee taking into account suggestions made by members of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ICCP) and the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ECCP) at the consultations between the Committee and NGO representatives held at New York on 3 and 4 February 1997 and in subsequent consultations with the chairpersons of both the ICCP and ECCP. The central theme of the combined meeting was "Ending 30 years of occupation - the role of NGOs".

5. At the opening session, a message from Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, was delivered by his representative, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Under-Secretary-General and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva. Mr. Ka spoke in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. A statement was made by Mr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization and representative of Palestine. The opening session was also addressed by Mr. Don Betz, Chairman of ICCP and Mr. John Gee, Chairman of ECCP. Statements were also made by Mr. Herman Leonard de Silva (Sri Lanka), Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, Mr. Said Kamal, Assistant-Secretary-General for Palestinian Affairs of the League of Arab States, Mr. Abdelaziz Aboughosh, Assistant-Secretary-General for Palestinian Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and Mr. Venant Wege, representative of the Organization of African Unity.

6. The invited experts made presentations in two plenary sessions, which were followed by a discussion. In the first plenary session, entitled "Briefings on the current political situation", Mr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, spoke on the current status of the peace process; Mr. Peter Hansen, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, spoke on the situation on the ground; and Ms. Asma Khader, Director-General of Al-Haq, spoke on the role of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

7. The second plenary session was entitled "NGO action on the question of Palestine - challenges and prospects". Mr. Gabi Baramki, First Vice-President of the Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace, spoke on the need for coordinated international campaigns in support of Palestinian rights. Presentations on "Sharing experience, developing new strategies - regional assessments" were made by Mr. Fritz Fröhlich, Regional Representative, Society for Austro-Arab Relations, Jerusalem; Mr. K. M.

Khan, Chairman of the Asian Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, Member of ICCP; Mr. Sébastian Carliez, Executive Secretary of the French NGO Platform for Palestine and Ms. Isabelle Avran, Secretary-General of the Association France-Palestine; Mr. Ahmed Saad, Member of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, Haifa, Member of ICCP; Mr. José Elias, President of the Palestinian Federation in Chile, Vice-Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine; Mr. David Graybeal, Chairman of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC), Ms. Kathy Bergen, Member of the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, Member of NACC; and Mr. Allam Jarrar, Vice-President of the Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace, Member of ICCP.

8. In addition to the plenary sessions, six workshops on action opportunities and technical resources were held consecutively for NGO participants. The first workshop, entitled "Palestine in the United Nations system", provided for briefings on institutional, procedural and substantive aspects of the consideration of issues related to Palestine in various bodies and sectors of the United Nations system. The speakers were Mrs. Laura Reanda, Chief of the Division for Palestinian Rights; Mr. Alfred de Zayas, Human Rights Officer at the Support Services Branch of the Centre for Human Rights; Mr. Omar Daoudi, Senior Advisor of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, United Nations Development Programme, Jerusalem; and Mr. Marwan Ali, NGO Liaison Officer in the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, Gaza. The second workshop dealt with electronic resources for information and networking. Speakers were Mrs. Nina Leneman, Chief of the User Services Section of the UNOG Library; Ms. Carol Davies, Librarian in charge of "Cyberspace" at UNOG; Mr. Alvaro Calderon, Librarian at the United Nations and Specialized Agencies Collections Reading Room at UNOG; Mr. Wolfgang Grieger, Political Affairs and Liaison Officer in the Division for Palestinian Rights; and Mr. Nigel Parry, webmaster at the Department of Public Information of Bir Zeit University.

9. Four action-oriented workshops discussed opportunities for specific campaigns on crucial issues. The speaker in the workshop on campaigns against settlements was Mr. Ghassan Andoni, Lecturer at Bir Zeit University. The workshop on campaigns for East Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian State had as a resource person Mrs. Sarah Kaminker, planning consultant, Jerusalem. Speakers in the workshop on campaigns for refugee rights and family reunification were Mr. As'ad Abdul Rahman, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Mr. André Rosenthal, human rights lawyer, Jerusalem. The fourth of the action-oriented workshops addressed campaigns on economic and social issues. The speaker was Mr. Fritz Fröhlich, Regional Representative, Society for Austro-Arab Relations, Jerusalem.

10. The participating NGOs adopted an NGO plan of action containing proposals made during their deliberations in the plenary and workshops (see annex I). The NGO participants also elected a new ICCP and a new ECCP (see annexes III and IV).

II. OPENING STATEMENTS

11. In his message, **Mr. Kofi Annan**, Secretary-General of the United Nations, emphasized that he was firmly committed to strengthening partnerships between the United Nations and NGOs. He recalled that, well before the establishment of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, NGOs had been active in supporting the humanitarian and other work of the United Nations, in particular that of UNRWA. He called upon the NGOs to make an even greater contribution in view of the current deteriorating situation on the ground and great difficulties in the resumption of negotiations. He expressed his grave concern over the setbacks to the peace process and his regret that the Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations had been deadlocked for several months. He recalled the recent meetings of the Security Council, the resumed session of the General Assembly and the convening of the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly and referred to his report where he had drawn attention to the deteriorating political and security situation, as well as the negative impact of the Israeli settlement activities and the various Israeli measures affecting the rights of the Palestinian people in the occupied territory. He noted that the General Assembly had

emphasized the responsibilities, including personal, arising from persistent violations and grave breaches of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and had requested him to report on efforts to convene a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention on measures to enforce it in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

12. The Secretary-General said further in his message that he had repeatedly condemned all acts of terrorism aimed at innocent civilians, of which the bombing in Jerusalem had been the latest, as acts aimed to undermine and derail the peace process. He also underlined the need for a commitment by the Israeli Government to eschew unilateral acts which have the effect of pre-empting the outcome of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Measures that could be perceived as collective punishment against the Palestinian people were not conducive to understanding between negotiating partners. Cooperation between the two parties would build trust and confidence upon which progress in the peace process could be built. He described the economic and social situation throughout the occupied territories as very serious, particularly in light of new restrictions imposed following the latest bombing, and said that the erosion of living standards and uncertainty over the future undermined prospects for peace in the area. It was essential for the humanitarian and development assistance work of the United Nations and the international donor community to continue unimpeded.

13. **Mr. Ibra Deguène Ka**, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, recalled that 1997 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. For that period, over two million Palestinians had lived with constant threats to their security, freedoms and economic well-being, posed by closures and roadblocks, military raids and arbitrary detention, land confiscation and the building of settlements, seizure of water resources, destruction of homes, separation of families, and the stifling of their economy. Occupation had become a vicious circle of oppression and resistance which fueled tension and conflict throughout the region. He pointed out that the beginning of the peace process in October 1991 had shown that Palestinians and Israelis were ready for reconciliation and in favour of a just peace and that mutual understanding and cooperation were possible.

14. He expressed the Committee's concern over the erosion in the peace process and the growing tension and violence on the ground which signaled an almost total breakdown of the negotiations and a return to many of the policies of the occupation, resulting in a loss of a sense of partnership and mutual trust. The Committee condemned all acts of violence against defenseless civilians, because of the loss of lives and the damage to the reconciliation effort between Palestinians and Israelis. He stressed that retaliatory measures, however, exacerbated Palestinian suffering and were counter-productive. In that regard, the Committee believed that the Israeli blockade of the Palestinian territory and the harsh economic measures were a form of collective punishment. The Committee had called for an immediate end to the construction of settlements and had played an active role in the meetings of the Security Council and the General Assembly on that issue. He emphasized that the resolutions and documents of the Tenth Emergency Special Session contained important ideas which should inspire NGOs in their future work.

15. **Mr. As'ad Abdul Rahman**, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, representative of Palestine, pointed out that the Government and the party of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu were seeking to put an end to the Oslo accords, mainly through practical steps that were directed against the Palestinian people, against the Palestine Liberation Organization and also against the majority of the Israeli people who were for peace. He said that the Israeli closure of the Palestinian territory had adversely affected the economic situation, causing the daily loss of millions of dollars, worsening the already deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. With regard to the situation of the Palestine refugees, he noted that the UNRWA services had been curtailed. As a result of the Israeli closures, the transport of goods and supplies was brought to half of its former level, the free movement of UNRWA staff was curtailed affecting all services, including education and health. He urged the NGO participants to focus

particularly on the urgent support of UNRWA, to solve its financial crisis, in order to maintain the necessary basic services to the huge number of Palestine refugees and displaced persons.

16. **Mr. Don Betz**, Chairman of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, recalled the formation of the NGO movement on the question of Palestine in connection with the International Conference on the Question of Palestine in 1983, where the participating NGOs had accepted the full implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions as their common platform. In view of the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the State of Israel and the expected media attention, he called upon NGOs to prepare themselves to provide public opinion with an alternative perspective of history. Resolution 181 (II) which called for the partition of Palestine in a Jewish and an Arab state remained yet unfulfilled. NGOs should tell the story of the last 50 years as seen and felt through the eyes and hearts of the Palestinian people. Those efforts must be coordinated and well-publicized, in order to reach wider audiences in many countries. He called upon NGOs to work collectively and complementarily to offer the public, particularly in the United States and Europe, another version of that history. The United Nations should support those efforts and together with NGOs produce, disseminate and present updated videos and literature that present the question of Palestine to the first-time viewer and reader. He stressed that NGOs worldwide by closing ranks and acting in coordination constituted an emerging force in the changing landscape of international politics.

17. **Mr. John Gee**, Chairman of the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, said that the Palestinians were entitled to the same rights as other peoples, namely to live in freedom in their own land, to control their own territory and have its resources at their disposal to provide for their livelihoods and to determine their own future as an act of free will, not according to the dictates of others. The Israeli Government was systematically denying those rights to the Palestinians. While talking of peace, it was expanding settlements and tightening its grip on Jerusalem. The repeated closures of the Palestinian territory should be seen as indicators of the kind of control which Israel intended to retain in its hands in the future. The Israeli policies and practices would undermine the prospects for a settlement. He continued that, internationally, the view of many Governments was that peace depended upon the leaders and negotiators of the two sides, an approach that favoured the stronger party, whose position was strengthened whenever the outside world took an agnostic position on matters of principle. He welcomed the debate and the resolutions of the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly as a sign of a change in the position of Governments. He called upon NGOs to urge upon their Governments a stronger stand in favour of the basic rights of the Palestinian people and against all Israeli actions which infringed those rights. NGOs should influence public opinion, in particular in view of the forthcoming 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, and remind the public that there was still the Palestinian people which was denied all basic rights.

18. **Mr. Herman Leonard de Silva**, Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, reported that the Special Committee, on the basis of its recent field mission, had concluded that the situation of human rights in the occupied territories had deteriorated further over the past year owing to the Israeli settlement policy and the repeated closures of the Palestinian territory with their attendant economic and social hardships. He said that the peace process had reached a decisive stage; repeated delays in the implementation of the agreements could lead to its complete breakdown, which would be dangerous for the whole region. The international community must take an active and positive role in safeguarding the peace process.

19. **Mr. Said Kamal**, Assistant-Secretary-General for Palestinian Affairs of the League of Arab States, called for a redoubling of international efforts to establish peace in the Middle East. He said that the new Israeli Government had resumed the violations of human rights of the Palestinian people. It refused to live up to its commitments under the Oslo accords; it created new realities by starting a series of new settlement constructions in violation of General Assembly resolutions and bilateral agreements; it altered the character of Jerusalem, depriving Palestinian citizens of their rights in the city and threatening Christian and Muslim faiths; it refused to implement United Nations resolutions on

the withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan. He emphasized that achieving a just peace meant primarily giving the Palestinian people its national rights, including the establishment of its own State.

20. **Mr. Abdelaziz Aboughosh**, Assistant-Secretary-General for Palestinian Affairs of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, denounced the Israeli war of embargo, isolation and hunger against the Palestinians as collective punishment of a whole people. He said that, since the new Israeli Government had taken office, the peace process was in a deadlock. The situation had deteriorated owing to the lack of respect for international accords regarding a peaceful settlement. Israeli confiscation of Palestinian lands and destruction of homes had only resulted in an escalation of tension that was a dangerous threat to peace. He called upon the international community to force Israel to stop its inhuman policies against the Palestinian people, to stop the expansion of settlements and to resume peace talks with the Palestinians, the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon.

21. **Mr. Venant Wege**, representative of the Organization of African Unity, emphasized that the OAU had always been in solidarity with the Palestinian people and considered the question of Palestine an African problem that would remain on its agenda until it was resolved in its entirety. He recalled that the latest OAU summit in Harare had expressed deep concern over the situation with regard to the question of Palestine and about the non-respect of international accords by Israel. The Israeli decision to build new housing in Palestinian lands represented an obstacle to the peace process; such measures would compromise peace efforts and would lead to further conflict in the region.

III. PLENARY SESSIONS

Plenary session i. Briefings on the current political situation

1. The current status of the peace process

22. **Mr. As'ad Abdul Rahman**, Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, said that the fears for a setback in the peace process expressed at last year's International Meeting had become a reality. The future of Middle East peace had never been more at stake than it was in the current situation. The new Government of Prime Minister Netanyahu, who had more constitutional power than any of his predecessors, was interpreting the Oslo accords in its own way, confirming, in fact, that it did not feel bound by the commitments signed by the previous Government. Following the recent terrorist acts in Jerusalem, the Israeli Government had taken measures which directly violated not only the Oslo accords but international law on human rights; the closure of the borders and road blockades had severely affected the economic situation of the population. The Government had used those incidents as a pretext for not implementing the accords. He said that the Palestinian Authority believed that terrorism was a common enemy which should be combatted. The Israeli Government refused to continue the negotiations in the seven previously established subcommittees; it wanted just the subcommittee on security to keep working. It had launched a systematic media campaign against the PLO and against President Arafat personally. Mr. Abdul Rahman concluded by saying that the period ahead would be very difficult for the Palestinian people and for all forces interested in promoting peace in the Middle East.

2. The situation on the ground

23. **Mr. Peter Hansen**, Commissioner-General of UNRWA, pointed out that the Israeli closure of the Palestinian territory had strangled the economic and social life of the Palestinians and critically hampered the operations of the donor community, including the United Nations agencies. The social and economic situation of the refugees in Gaza was particularly affected; it had already eroded during the intifada and the Gulf war, and it had become a struggle to satisfy their daily needs. The blockade of agricultural exports had led to an over-saturated market inside Gaza and a sharp drop in prices which rendered it too expensive for farmers to continue the harvest. The blockade of exports of finished products such as textiles had led to a further increase in unemployment. The blockade of imported

commodities had also halted all building and other construction activities, which had been growing in the territories. The lack of raw materials and non-payment of salaries to employees had led to factory closures. In general, during the 1990s, the economic and social situation of the Palestinians had deteriorated drastically.

24. He continued by describing the critical situation UNRWA was facing owing to a lack of funds provided by the donor community and to the restrictions imposed by Israel. The required cuts would affect the education of refugee children as well as some health services. An additional challenge was the rapid increase of the Palestinian population owing to a very high birth rate. The only solution had to be a political one to decide the fate of the Palestinian refugees.

3. The role of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War

25. **Mrs. Asma Kader**, Director-General of al-Haq, (Law in the Service of Man), said that, since the beginning of the occupation 30 years ago, the Palestinian people had been suffering despite the safeguards enshrined in the Fourth Geneva Convention. Although there was international consensus regarding the applicability of the Convention to the occupied territories, practical steps by the international community to apply it seemed to be difficult. She pointed out that international humanitarian law aimed at limiting harm to the civilian population in time of war. In any armed conflict, no party should act in defiance of humanitarian principles. She emphasized that the Geneva Conventions were binding to the parties to it; moreover, since they had become part of recognized international law, they were binding also upon non-parties. All States parties to the conflict had signed the Convention. In 1989, the PLO also reported that it committed itself to the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Mrs. Kader called upon the High Contracting Parties not to allow further violations of the provisions of the Convention and to take urgent action. The international community had to move from moral support of the Palestinian people towards concrete legal steps and their strict implementation. She welcomed, in that regard, the results of the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly.

Plenary session ii: NGO action on the question of Palestine - challenges and prospects

1. The need for coordinated international campaigns in support of the Palestinian people

26. **Mr. Gabi Baramki**, First Vice-President of the Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace, said that with the new Israeli Government, all development schemes that had been started after the signing of the Oslo accords had come to a halt. In view of the tense situation on the ground, he urged the NGOs to transcend their national borders and work in a concerted effort towards the continuation of the peace process. Pressure had to be placed on Israel as had been done successfully during the years of the intifada. Such pressure would give an important signal to the Israeli public, who could tilt the balance in favour of a peaceful settlement with the Palestinians. Steps by the European and national parliaments and boycotts of Israel by cultural groups could gradually mobilize Israeli public opinion to respect human rights, including the right to self-determination of the Palestinians. Turning to concrete projects to assist the Palestinians, he said that growing sectors of the Palestinian population were in need of support for survival. A strategy and projects for sustainable development would have to be developed in a scientific way. The main option was developing Palestinian human resources by training Palestinian trainers, helping in faculty development at Palestinian universities and colleges, and promoting cultural activities and exchanges. He suggested the use of Eurovision, which is seen by many millions of Europeans and also by Israelis, to publicize Israeli human rights violations.

2. Sharing experience, developing new strategies - regional assessments

27. **Mr. Fritz Fröhlich**, Regional Representative of the Society for Austro-Arab Relations in Jerusalem, pointed out that since the signing of the Oslo accords NGOs had been fighting for their

economic survival and political existence instead of taking up major political issues. He emphasized the importance of a broad NGO presence in the region to obtain local expertise, to identify priorities and to establish cooperation based on long-term commitments and reliability. NGOs should improve their leadership ability for concerted action at both national and international levels. A joint strategic framework should guide the multitude of NGO actors involved. Political analysis must be translated into timely political action. The situation of the Palestinians on the ground and the international political developments on the question of Palestine should be monitored in a more organized and concerted effort. Lobbying and advocacy capacities of NGOs had to be identified and used in the respective countries. The flow of qualified and relevant information between all actors must be intensified and accelerated. He recommended the creation of NGO task forces on major issues such as the peace process, Jerusalem, refugees, settlements and human rights. One specific task force on media, including the use of the Internet, should further develop that important tool through data banks, information and research networks to improve NGO capacities for lobbying and advocacy.

28. **Mr. K. M. Khan**, Chairman of the Asian Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ACCP), denounced Israeli steps to undermine the results of the peace process, in particular the construction of a new settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim, and welcomed in that regard the results of the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly. He said that the Asian community had always extended solidarity and support to the liberation struggle of the Palestinian people. Asian NGOs were emotionally attached to the Palestinian cause. The Asian Seminar and NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine, held in May 1997 in Jakarta, was a new milestone in the Asian NGO activities in support of the Palestinian people. It was decided that Asian NGOs should develop national platforms in all the countries where they did not yet exist in order to promote NGO coordination and action. In that regard he referred to the formation of a Bangladesh Coordinating Committee on Palestine. Asian NGOs should take advantage of Internet/e-mail for the dissemination of information between themselves and organizations in other parts of the world engaged in similar activities. He stated that the ACCP had started to issue a newsletter from New Delhi and wished to increase its frequency. Asian NGOs planned to organize national conferences and meetings on the occasion of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November 1997. In conclusion, he expressed optimism about building a close NGO network in Asia in support of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

29. **Mr. Sébastian Carliez**, Executive Secretary of the French Platform for Palestine, said that the Platform had been formed by 23 individual NGOs characterized by diversity in their fields of activity, geographical scope, allegiance, methods of operation and background. The platform had been founded after the signing of the Oslo accords and took advantage of that diversity which enhanced the action of the individual organizations as well as their collective action. A conference in October 1995 resulted in joint development-oriented activities. The Platform supported a comprehensive programme in the fields of health, education and agriculture. All consultations between the NGOs and the French Government were conducted through the Platform, which had thus become the prime non-governmental liaison with the French Government on both development and political issues. He emphasized the importance for any NGO or group of NGOs of achieving credibility in order to gain public support and to maintain lobbying.

30. **Ms. Isabelle Avran**, Secretary-General of the Association France-Palestine, stressed that for the French Platform, development projects and political activities were principally linked. Their example showed that it was possible for NGOs to campaign politically in order to build economic pressure on Israel. European and international coordination of such actions would enhance their effect. She described actions by the Platform to prevent the French Parliament from ratifying the association agreement of the European Union with Israel. The NGOs felt that the agreement had been signed in 1995 in order to promote the peace process. The new Israeli Government, by violating substantial parts of the Oslo accords, had also revoked the basis for the association agreement with the European Union. In conversations with French parliamentarians, in particular of the Foreign Affairs Committee, NGO representatives had asked them to link ratification to certain conditions, such as implementing already signed accords and honouring the "land for peace" principle recognized by the Madrid process.

The advocacy efforts were supported by citizen-based diplomacy and postcard actions to oppose the Israeli settlement policy and to support the rights of Palestinians living in Jerusalem. That national campaign should be elevated to the European level to oppose ratification by the European Parliament under prevailing circumstances. Future political activities of the Platform would focus on the status of Jerusalem.

31. **Mr. Ahmed Saad**, Knesset member for the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, Member of ICCP, said that the policy of the new right-wing coalition in Israel was not based on peace as a strategic option. Their actions had led to the most dangerous phase of the struggle for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. He called upon NGOs to use the forthcoming important anniversaries to devise an effective strategy, nationally and globally, to meet the serious challenges and to rescue the peace process. He referred to a consultative meeting of various peace-oriented organizations in Israel aimed at developing coordinated resistance by the various Jewish and Arab groups. The resulting programme of activities was geared towards mass action and parliamentary action to rescue the peace process and to replace the current right-wing Government with an alternative Government committed to a just peace as a strategic option. First mass demonstrations and protest marches had taken place; however, they had not yet attracted the tens or hundreds of thousands of participants required to impress the Government. But sensitizing public opinion was a major tool to support the rights of the Palestinian people. He urged better coordination among the peace forces on a wider regional level by eliminating existing obstacles, particularly with regard to the issue of normalization of relations with Israel. That should allow the convening of bilateral and multilateral meetings to develop offensive campaigns to oppose the policies of the current Israeli Government.

32. **Mr. José Elias**, President of the Palestinian Federation in Chile, Vice-Chairman of the Latin American and Caribbean Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, stressed that the most important challenge for NGOs on the question of Palestine in his region was to work with the mass media in each country. The public received its news mostly from big international news providers who provided usually pro-Israeli information, resulting in one-sided public opinion. Ongoing contact and support to oral and written media should become a priority for NGO work in Latin America and the Caribbean. The media should be enabled to provide an objective view of the situation in the Palestinian territories. Issues like the seizure of Palestinian water resources by the occupier, severe restrictions on building permits for Palestinians, prisoners held in jail without charges, or sanctioned torture of Palestinian prisoners must reach public opinion. That work should be complemented by the media available to the Palestinian diaspora in order to raise awareness of the bias and inaccuracy of Middle East news, to counter the widespread ignorance of the history of the conflict, and to mobilize concrete action by communities. He provided information on programmes of direct aid to Palestinians, and on national and regional public events, such as the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. Various means existed to further advocacy, for instance committees of parliamentarians that promote friendship and solidarity with the Palestinian people.

33. **Mr. David Graybeal**, Chairman of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC), pointed out that politically, economically, religiously and militarily, the United States was on the side of Israel. That partisanship was reinforced by films, news analysis, magazines and newspapers representing an enormous challenge to NGOs that supported the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. He emphasized the diversity of the NGOs working on that issue and reported on some initiatives his NGO, the United Methodist Church, had recently taken. He proposed some actions for the consideration of United States-based NGOs: placing an Israeli rubber bullet on the desk of every Congressperson; cultivating the few Congress people that were open-minded towards the question of Palestine; publishing regularly the comparative number of deaths of Palestinians and Israelis at the hands of each other, beginning with 1948; reporting monthly in Christian publications the number of Christians and Muslims still allowed to live in Jerusalem; organizing programmes on college and university campuses; encouraging every denomination to establish a Middle East committee; sponsoring tours of Palestinians and Israelis in the United States; determining one common project for all interested NGOs to center around.

34. **Ms. Kathy Bergen**, of the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, Member of the NACC, said that her organization had established a Middle East Peace Education Program because it felt that the policies of the United States Government were a major complicating factor to a solution. The goals of the programme were to educate United States policy makers about the realities in the Middle East and the United States public about Middle East issues and to support progressive efforts for a just and lasting peace in the region. She gave information on concrete actions North American organizations had taken and invited others to join in: placing ads on Jerusalem in national and local newspapers; organizing conferences, seminars and meetings; releasing statements on crucial developments in the conflict; organizing speaking tours of Palestinians and Israelis, and having them meet US policy makers in Washington; producing and distributing videos on Jerusalem and settlement issues; preparing information packages on crucial issues; collecting petitions and sending them to the US Government; campaigning for the closure of a Days Inn hotel that had opened in a settlement in Gaza, and others. In view of the difficult financial and staffing situation many organizations were facing, she called upon individual NGOs to take responsibility for the work of the network, including communication, strategy and funding; to create links to new NGOs that had not yet worked on the Palestinian-Israeli issue, such as environmental groups; and to use the most recent decisions of the United Nations, such as the resolution of the Tenth Emergency Special Session, in their advocacy and public education efforts.

35. **Mr. Allam Jarrar**, Vice-President of the Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace and Member of the ICCP, gave an overview of the historical evolution of the Palestinian NGO movement and said that there were, nowadays, 1200 Palestinian NGOs functioning and providing different kinds of services to the people. He stated that at the current crucial stage of political developments, the Palestinian NGO movement should reevaluate its goals and objectives and establish new priorities. There was a need to determine how NGOs would continue to build the infrastructure of resistance as long as the Palestinian territories remained occupied, what contribution NGOs could make to the socio-economic development of the Palestinian people, and how they could contribute to the building of a Palestinian civil society that was fully democratic and participatory. Coordination between Palestinian NGOs and the Palestinian Authority should be put on the basis of partnership and be guided by a democratic law regulating the relationship.

IV. CLOSING STATEMENTS

36. **Mr. John Gee**, Chairman of the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, speaking on behalf of the ECCP and ICCP, said that a number of the suggestions made by last year's meeting had been implemented. The NGO plan of action adopted by the meeting represented a clear guideline for the NGO work during the future months. He called upon all organizations to join in its implementation.

37. **Mr. Gabi Baramki**, representing Palestine, emphasized that the meeting was of high quality and that participants had discussed seriously all the crucial problems facing the Palestinian people. The current critical situation called for intensified efforts to put the peace process back on track.

38. **Mr. Ibra Deguène Ka**, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, said that the members of the NGO community played an important role in fostering international action to bring the occupation of the Palestinian territories to an end. They also endeavoured to influence their respective Governments and to engender positive public opinion on the subject. They contributed moral and material assistance to the Palestinian people in ameliorating their living conditions and in resisting the occupation. He said that the Committee attached great importance to NGO contributions to the Palestinian cause and spoke of effective contributions made by the international and European NGOs to help the Palestinians during the difficult phase of transition to self-determination. During that difficult period of the peace process, the Palestinians needed, more than ever, to receive support and assistance in an organized and effective manner.

ANNEX I

NGO Plan of Action

Introduction

The non-governmental organizations participating in the United Nations International NGO Meeting/European NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine held at Geneva in August 1997 were informed of the current situation with regard to the negotiations between Israel and the PLO, the desperate situation on the ground, and of the role of the international community. They expressed serious concern over the current stalemate in the negotiations, resulting from Israeli policies and practices which can lead the Middle East region into a new period of extreme tensions and possible conflict. They called for the immediate lifting of the closures of the West Bank and Gaza Strip which have severely impaired the ability of the Palestinians to earn their livelihoods and go about the legitimate pursuits of their daily life.

The NGO participants strongly felt the need for coordinated international campaigns in support of the rights of the Palestinian people. They assessed, nationally, regionally and internationally, the activities of the NGO movement on the question of Palestine, shared their experience and developed new ideas, proposals and strategies to oppose the current deterioration of the situation of the Palestinian people and to bring about the end of the 30-year Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and the other Arab territories, and the establishment of a Palestinian State.

They concluded that NGO campaigns on the national and international level should be primarily focused on ending the Israeli policy of establishing and expanding settlements, supporting the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including its own State with East Jerusalem as its capital, ensuring the release of all Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli prisons without trial and stopping all forms of torture, supporting the rights of the Palestinian refugees to return and/or compensation, as well as family reunification and on continuing and intensifying all efforts to assist the Palestinian people in the economic and social fields.

The NGO participants declared individually and collectively that they recognize the State of Palestine with borders in conformity with those announced by the Palestine National Council in its Declaration of Independence of 1988. This involves full national sovereignty and self-determination for the entire Palestinian people inside their country and in exile to be exercised in the territory encompassing the West Bank and Gaza Strip including East Jerusalem in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions. The NGO participants called upon all NGOs worldwide to join them in this solemn declaration and to petition the Governments of their respective nations to recognize the State of Palestine on this basis.

The NGO participants welcomed the results of the Tenth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly and agreed to undertake concerted efforts towards their respective Governments to implement the provisions of resolutions ES-10/2 and ES-10/3, in particular with regard to the convening of a conference by the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, in order to enforce the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

The NGO participants affirmed the importance of supporting and highlighting the role of Palestinian NGOs. They stated their commitment to support the Israeli peace forces and the NGOs which uphold Palestinian rights and the rights of the other peoples of the region.

The NGOs expressed their appreciation of the work of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Division for Palestinian Rights. They declared their intention of urging their Governments to fully support the work of these institutions.

Participating NGOs committed themselves to undertake the following activities:

Campaigns against Settlements

To oppose the Israeli settlement policy, NGOs agreed that:

- It is imperative, on the Palestinian level, to organize direct popular resistance by the Palestinian people and preemptive measures to protect threatened areas. Resources will have to be mobilized and popular resistance has to be organized and supported. A list of Palestinian NGOs working in that direction had to be made known to the network as potential partners for other NGOs that wanted to support this movement. A grass roots network of land defense committees had to be established and equipped with experienced staff and resources. In areas threatened by the Israeli settlement policy, Palestinian housing projects should be developed and construction started;

- Camping on endangered areas was considered a highly efficient means of hindering the practical implementation of expropriations and the construction of settlements. In case of the demolition of houses, the presence of representatives of international NGOs as foreign observers could aid in hindering the work of the bulldozers;

- Legal action within the Israeli judicial system was important to slow down the implementation of settlement projects, to render them complicated and difficult and to stop some of them eventually. Legal advice should be made available to farmers and individual Palestinian families. This required good knowledge of Israeli legal procedures, which should be obtained with the assistance of Israeli lawyers and organizations active in that field;

- Solidarity, coordination and cooperation with NGOs in other countries, in particular in North America and Europe, as well as with the Israeli peace and human rights movement, was very important. International campaigns should focus on delegitimizing settlements by demonstrating that they are directed towards the colonization of the Palestinian people's land, against peace and constitute a direct threat to the very viability of Palestinian society and national existence. Advocacy towards Governments and Parliaments should be supported by sound legal arguments deriving from international law, the agreements between Israel and the PLO and United Nations conventions and resolutions. The ICCP in cooperation with Palestinian NGOs should prepare a paper of argumentation to be used for advocacy and for public presentations;

- It was especially important to organize a sustained media campaign in Europe and North America, to raise the standard of presentation to the media, using actual maps, videos, etc. NGO representatives working in that field should attend media training programmes in order to maximize their impact on public opinion. NGOs should take advantage of the Internet to gather up-to-date information, to present themselves to a potential constituency and to liaise with each other;

- Any campaigns in North America, Europe and elsewhere should include the demand for economic pressure on Israel, showing the economic consequences of political developments in the region. Demanding sanctions against Israel should be a tool used by grassroots organizations as a response to the policies of the Israeli Government. Urgent action was required to oppose the ratification by national parliaments in Europe of the Israeli Association Agreement with the European Union which is expected to enter into force on 1 January 1998, after its ratification by the 15 member States and the European Parliament, on the basis of the human rights clause contained in article 2. The NGO campaigns should focus on parliamentarians in order to influence the relevant debate in the European Parliament;

- Parallel activities in related fields should support the campaigns against settlements: campaigns for the right to worship in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the occupied territory, helping Palestinian Jerusalemites to defend their national and civil rights, boycott of Israeli products, in particular those produced in settlements, initiating Palestinian housing projects in different places implementing individually and unilaterally the right to return.

Campaign for East Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian State

In order to defend Palestinian rights to East Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian State, NGOs agreed to the following:

- Elected Palestinian deputies representing Jerusalem should be invited by European parliamentarians and/or NGOs to express their concerns to national and other parliamentary forums;

- The ICCP and the ECCP should organize a trip to Jerusalem for a high-level delegation of jurists to examine the situation on the ground at first hand and to inform their public opinion at home about what is occurring;

- NGOs should launch campaigns to inform their constituencies of the illegality of Israeli measures intended to change the status of Jerusalem by organizing seminars and conferences, issuing pamphlets and sending postcards and letters. They should seek to bring home to their public the impact these measures are having upon the Palestinian people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who are denied free access to places of worship, important medical facilities and to Jerusalem, a key centre of Palestinian economic, social and intellectual life. They should highlight through concrete cases what the Palestinians of Jerusalem are undergoing;

- The ICCP, NACCP and individual NGOs should find ways and means to make known to members of the United States Congress and United States embassies around the world their strong objection to the decision to proceed with moving the United States Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem in recognition of Israel's claim that Jerusalem is its capital. This is in disregard of United Nations resolutions and has been decided without an agreement on Jerusalem's future having been concluded between Israel and the Palestinians;

- NGOs, particularly those affiliated with Christian churches, should launch a systematic information campaign directed at Christian pilgrims visiting the holy sites in order to inform them of the relevant legal and political issues, and the suffering of the Palestinian people and to urge upon them the importance of meeting local Palestinian Muslims and Christians during their visit;

- NGOs were encouraged to participate in the international conference "Jerusalem, Capital of Peace" that will be held in Brussels from 27 to 29 November 1997, organized by the Forum des Citoyens de la Méditerranée.

Campaigns for refugee rights, including the right of return and family reunification

To support the rights of Palestinian refugees and family reunification, the NGOs agreed to:

- Respond to the impending 50th anniversary of the creation of Israel (15 May 1998) with campaigns aimed at drawing the attention of public opinion towards the plight of the Palestine refugees and renewing their Governments' commitment towards the implementation of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 1948. NGOs should seek to

involve a wide range of new NGOs in their efforts. The model of the commemoration of the International Day of Solidarity on 29 November may be followed to organize national events, to initiate debates in national parliaments, among other activities, in order to raise public awareness;

- Lobby Governments in donor countries, to ensure that they will continue to provide the necessary support for UNRWA to maintain and improve its services to Palestinians both inside and outside their homeland; and to lobby potential donors, including private companies and large NGOs to join the donor community;

- Support the campaign of twinning refugee camps with towns and villages in Europe;

- Issue a pamphlet for tourists going to the region about the situation of the refugees;

- Pay particular attention to the situation in the refugee camps in Lebanon, to send a fact-finding mission and to draw the necessary conclusions in support of the Palestinian refugees there.

Campaign on economic and social issues

To assist the Palestinian people in the economic and social fields, participating NGOs agreed to:

- Promote tourism to the Palestinian territory, encourage tourists, church groups and others to spend more time in the Palestinian areas; besides the economic effect, this would help to influence public opinion in the countries of origin of the visitors. Specialized programs for students, trade unionists and others should bring them to Palestinian homes to show the effects of the closures. Lobby publishers to follow politically correct terminology in tourist guides and other books dealing with the region, to contribute to improving the image of the Palestinians and to promote tourism to the Palestinian areas;

- Promote support for the construction of the port of Gaza, the opening of the Rafah airport and the implementation of a safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank;

- Provide concrete assistance in the fields of education, development of curriculums, communication and respective technologies;

- Advocate that international music, dance and theatre groups scheduled to visit Israel make their appearance subject to Israel's compliance with human rights conventions and encourage them to accept engagements in the Palestinian territory, providing these groups with facts on the situation on the ground and promoting contacts with Palestinian cultural groups.

ANNEX II

List of participants and observers

NGO participants

Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization, Cairo
Aide-Sanitaire Suisse aux Palestiniens, Geneva
Al-Haq, Ramallah
American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia
Arab Lawyers Union, Cairo
Arab Organization for Human Rights, Cairo
Association Belgo-palestinienne, Brussels
Association France-Palestine, Paris
Association Médicale Franco-palestinienne, Lauris, France
Association pour l'union entre les peuples juifs et palestiniens, Geneva
Church of Humanism, New York
Cimade - Service Oecuménique d'entraide, Paris
Comitè Catholique Contre le faim et pour le develloppement (C.c.f.d.), Paris
Confederation Democratique du Travail, Casablanca
Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding, London
Euro-Palestinian Economic and Consultancy Unit, Brussels
French Platform for Palestine
Friends World Committee for Consultation, Geneva
General Arab Women's Federation (Iraq), Geneva
Gesellschaf Für Österreichisch-arabische Beziehungen (Society for Austro-Arab Relations), Vienna
Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity, Athens
Indo-Arab Islamic Association, New Delhi
International Catholic Migration Commission, Geneva
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva
International Institute of Humanitarian Law, Geneva
International Jewish Peace Union, Tel Aviv
International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Geneva
Inter-Parliamentary Union, Geneva
Federacion Palestina de Chile, Santiago
Fundación Argentina para el Tercer Mundo (Fatem), Buenos Aires
Labour Middle East Council, London
Lutheran World Federation, Geneva
Médecins sans Frontières - Greek Section, Athens
Movement against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples, Paris
Nord-sud XXI, Geneva
Palestine Council for Peace and Justice, Ramallah
Palestine Groups of Norway, Oslo
Palestine Red Crescent Society, West Bank
Pax Christi International, Geneva
Solidarity International for Human Rights, Washington, DC
Spanish NGO Committee on the Question of Palestine, Madrid
Union of Local Association of Unrecognized Villages in Israel - Ulauv, Nahif, Israel
United Nations Association of Egypt, Cairo
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Geneva
Women's World Summit Foundation, Geneva
World Federation of United Nations Associations, Geneva
World Alliance of YMCAs, Geneva
World Muslim Congress, Geneva
World Young Women's Christian Association, Geneva

NGO observers

Association of Women of the Mediterranean Region, Kyle, Texas
Azad Muslim Welfare Complex - Bangladesh
Civil Volunteer Group (GVC), Bologna
Fellesutvalget fur Palestina (Norwegian Association of NGOs for Palestine), Oslo
Forum des Citoyens de la Mediterranée, Montreuil, France
Human Rights Information and Document System, Geneva
[The] National Institution Office, Ramallah
National Training Center for Resource Center Directors, Richmond, Virginia
Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (Law), Jerusalem
Save the Children (UK), Camberwell
World Jewish Congress, Geneva

Panelists and workshop resource persons

Mr. As'ad Abdul Rahman
Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

Mr. Ghassan Andoni
Lecturer, Bir Zeit University

Mr. Gabi Baramki
First Vice-President, Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace

Ms. Kathy Bergen
American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia;
Member of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (NACC)

Mr. Don Betz
Chairman of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ICCP)

Mr. Sébastien Carliez
Chairman, French NGO Platform for Palestine

Mr. José Elias
President of the Palestinian Federation in Chile;
Vice-Chairman, Federation of Palestinian Organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean;
Vice-Chairman, Latin American and Caribbean Coordinating Committee for NGOs
on the Question of Palestine

Mr. Fritz Fröhlich
Regional Representative, Society for Austro-Arab Relations, Jerusalem

Mr. John Gee
Chairman of the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ECCP)

Mr. David Graybeal
Chairman of the North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine
(NACC)

Mr. Peter Hansen
Commissioner-General, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near
East (UNRWA)

Mr. Allam Jarrar, Vice President, Palestinian Committee for Justice and Peace;
Member of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ICCP)

Ms. Sarah Kaminker
Planning consultant, Jerusalem

Ms. Asma Khader
Director-General, Al-Haq, Ramallah

Mr. K. M. Khan
Chairman, Asian Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine (ACCP);
Member of the ICCP

Mr. Nigel Parry
Webmaster, Department of Public Information, Bir Zeit University, West Bank

Mr. André Rosenthal
Human rights lawyer, Jerusalem

Mr. Ahmad Saad
Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, Haifa;
Member of the ICCP

Coordinating Committees for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

Asian Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine	Mr. K. M. Khan, Chairman
European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine	Mr. John Gee, Chairperson Ms. Maria Gazi, Vice-Chairperson Mr. Pierre Galand Ms. Luisa Sirvent
International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine	Mr. Don Betz, Chairman
Latin American and Caribbean Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine	Mr. Jose Felix Ferreyra, Chairman Mr. José Elias, Vice-Chairman
North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine	Mr. David M. Graybeal, Chairman Ms. Jo Bales Gallagher Ms. Kathy Bergen

Delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

His Excellency Mr. Ibra Deguène Ka
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations;
Chairman of the Committee and Head of the Delegation

His Excellency Mr. Ravan A. G. Farhadi
Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations
Vice-Chairman of the Committee

His Excellency Mr. George Saliba
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations
Rapporteur of the Committee

His Excellency Mr. Anatoli M. Zlenko
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations

Mr. M. Nasser Al-Kidwa
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations

Governments

Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Guinea, Holy See, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom

United Nations bodies and agencies

Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights, Office the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), United Nations Volunteers/UNDP, World Health Organization (WHO)

Intergovernmental organizations

Council of Europe/North-South Centre
European Commission
League of Arab States
Organization of African Unity
Organization of the Islamic Conference

Other organizations having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining permanent offices at Headquarters

Palestine

ANNEX III

Membership of the International Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine 1997-1998

Chair: Mr. Don Betz

African Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

Arab Lawyers Union

Asian Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (Hadash)

European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

Latin American and Caribbean Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

North American Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine

Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace

Palestinian NGO Network

World Young Women's Christian Association

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and International Jewish Peace Union (one year each)

Note: One additionial seat was left open for a representative of Jewish Israeli NGOs, to be determined after further consultations by the Chair.

ANNEX IV

Membership of the European Coordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine 1997-1998

Chair	Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding
Vice-Chair	Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity
	Association Belgo-Palestinienne
	Comité Español de ONG sobre la Cuestión Palestina
	Italian Platform of NGOs on the Question of Palestine
	Norwegian Association of NGOs for Palestine
	Plateforme des ONG Françaises pour la Palestine

Note: Two additional seats were left vacant for a representative of German NGOs and a representative of East European NGOs, to be determined after further consultations by the Chair.